

The Church and Her Services.

A SERMON,

PREACHED BY THE

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AT ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, PERRYTOWN, AND AT ST. JOHN'S
CHURCH, ELIZABETHVILLE,

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This Sermon is printed at the request of many of my parishioners, who have also kindly undertaken to pay the necessary expenses attendant upon its publication.

J. H.

THE CHURCH AND HER SERVICES.

ST. JUDE'S EPISTLE, 8th verse.—Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.

Finding that we are here surrounded on all sides by people who may in a great measure be classed with those of whom St. Jude speaks in the text,—people who indeed “despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities,” I have thought it my duty as your pastor to speak more particularly, if possible, than hitherto, upon the subject of “The Church and Her Services,” that you yourselves might become better acquainted with Church rules and regulations, as connected with the worship of the Holy One, and also be led to feel and to know the proper and scriptural grounds upon which the Church claims your undivided and unbroken allegiance; and also that you might be able the better to confute the sophistry and false arguments of those misguided creatures, who, having abandoned the Church themselves, can never rest contented without continually striving to draw away others after them, to be partakers in their own great sin of schism and rebellion.

To this end, I shall therefore endeavour, in the first place, to lay before you, in order, the principal seasons observed in our worship, with a few remarks upon each; and, secondly, I shall speak of the Church as founded and established by Christ himself. With regard, then, to the particular seasons, which the Church celebrates throughout the year. Upon this head, the Prayer Book of the Church gives us specific teaching as to the order of such seasons; in following that order, I shall explain the cause and origin of each, and in the first place say a few words with regard to the formation of the Prayer Book itself. At the time of the Reformation, when it pleased Almighty God to raise up earnest and good men for the work of purifying His Church from the errors which had crept into her teaching and form of worship, it was in no degree the desire, or the inten-

tion of the Church's rulers, to establish a new church, or to form an entirely new code, or form of worship ; for they well knew that they could not establish a new church, because God alone has either the authority or the power for so mighty a work ; and they sought not in the compilation of the Book of Common Prayer to destroy the ancient prayers of the Church,—but only to cast out all that was evil, or that might tend to the promotion of evil ; in fine, they so endeavoured to establish the Holy Service, that the injunction of the apostle might be fulfilled, and “all things be done decently and in order.” And they who undertook so great a task, we should also bear in mind, were not men who had sprung up of themselves, or of their own appointment, to be teachers and rulers in God's Kingdom, but they were the true heads of the Church in England,—men apostolically ordained to minister in holy things,—men who could look back to the Apostles as their forerunners in the great work of preaching the Gospel of Christ,—men they were, of whom many proved their faith and their sincerity, by suffering as confessors and as martyrs for the work of Reformation, which, through the grace of God, they had been able to accomplish. And the holy men who were thus called to revise the ancient liturgies, and to prepare in one volume, so pure and scriptural a form of worship, that it might indeed be, the Book of Common Prayer, as that in which it was common for all men to join, and by which they were able to be more closely united when lifting up their voices and their hearts to God,—these men had no idea of casting off all remembrance of the prayers of their forefathers, by destroying them utterly ; but they carefully preserved the pure and good petitions composed by holy men, while they cast out the impure and profane innovations which had disfigured in a great degree the Prayer Books originally used. So that, thanks to the conservative care of the great reformers of the Church, we are now called to offer up prayers and petitions, which, for many hundred years, have been in constant use among those who have gone before us. Nor was this great work of preparing a form of worship suitable for all of God's creatures, who call themselves by the name of Christ, passed over lightly or carelessly, but at five separate times was it carefully revised and corrected, by different men, so that nought might remain that was not pure, simple, and scriptural, and that as far as man could make it so, it might

“be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.” In this Prayer Book, prepared with so much labour, and amidst so much danger, for our guidance, we find that the Church commences her course of services for the year with Advent Sunday,—not seeking to agree with the worldly calendar, in which the year commences at a different period,—but looking to be guided by the coming of the Son of God, who died that every soul might be able to obtain salvation; and so for four Sundays before Christmas (when we celebrate the birth of Christ) we are called to look unto the coming of Christ, and for which reason those four Sundays are called Advent Sundays (the word advent signifying a coming), as in them we are led especially, to look back, to the time when Christ did really come, and suffer death for all men, and also to look forward, to the second advent of that same Christ, who shall come, as He himself has declared in Holy Scripture, to “judge all men according to the deeds done in the body.” And, again, by these four Sundays of consideration, in which we are thus taught to look unto Christ’s advent, by this season of preparation, before we are called to celebrate the nativity of our blessed Lord, the Church would teach us to gather our thoughts together, and to feel how great was the work which Christ came to accomplish, and to have our hearts and desires led from earthly things, so that we might be the better fitted to kneel at the altar of our God, where we commemorate that sacrifice which once Christ offered up, in his own person upon the tree, for the sins of the whole world.

And then, after being thus taught to look with joy and thanksgiving to the advent of Christ, we are called to celebrate on Christmas day, that most wonderful event, the coming of Christ in the flesh. We might well imagine that the keeping of this day would have been considered a holy and most fitting observance for all Christians, as shewing forth that they wished to hold for ever in remembrance the great love of our Saviour, as upon this holy day of Christmas, so signally set forth; and yet do we find thousands of people who will not observe this sacred ordinance, and who try to excuse themselves on the ground that it is one of the customs of the Romish Church, and so ought to be left out and abolished by members of the Church of England,—as if the coming of the Lord Jesus was not the very ground of *our* faith and of *our* hopes,—and as

such ever to be held in sacred remembrance with praise and with thanksgiving. And, again, others will tell us that because the exact day of Christ's nativity has been disputed, and consequently we are not perfectly sure that we observe that which would be correct, that therefore our service is of no avail,—not considering that any day appointed for the commemoration of so marvellous a mercy, and by us held sacred on that account, would be acceptable in the sight of God,—who, knowing the secrets of our hearts, is well aware, whether our service is only an outward act, or whether it be the real worship of a thankful heart.

Next in order comes the Feast of the Circumcision, in which we are called to recollect the perfect obedience of Christ to the entire law of Moses, which He began to fulfil by submitting to be circumcised on the eighth day, according to the Jewish rite, so even thus early beginning to set us an example, by fulfilling the law of God. Next comes the Epiphany, when we are told to rejoice in the glorious truth, that all men, both Jews and Gentiles, have been called to enter the Church of Christ,—shewn forth at that time, when, by the leading of a star from the east, the wise men of the Gentiles were conducted to the feet of the Saviour of the world. And after a little while follows the service in which we read of "Christ's Presentation in the Temple," when He was presented unto the Lord,—still following in all its details the ceremonial usages of the Jewish Church. But now we come to the consideration of the season of Lent, wherein for forty days we are continually called upon to give ourselves up more closely to the worship of our Maker, and to humble ourselves before Him both in body and in soul; and this number of forty days is especially appointed as the time of more particular humiliation and earnest prayer, as being the length of time that Christ did fast and humble Himself (as man) before God in the wilderness, ere He began His ministry openly before the world. And well and wisely has the Church appointed this solemn period for mourning over our sins, and humbling ourselves before the Creator; for if Christ Himself considered such fasting and suffering necessary upon His part, when for a little while He had clothed Himself in our flesh, how much more necessary must it not be for us, poor, sinful creatures as we are. How necessary for us to try and copy the example of our Lord and Master, and for a little while to separate our

selves, if possible, from the world, and give up our whole attention to the great object of the salvation of our souls. How necessary, too, that some certain season should be thus appointed, in which we are called to the important work of humiliation, and in which we are to commemorate the great sufferings of our Divine Head in our behalf; for if such things were left to ourselves, we would most likely keep putting off the day from time to time, so that it perchance might never arrive, to the injury, and perhaps destruction, of our souls; but the Church has too much care for her children to suffer them to neglect so important a duty, and therefore calls upon them, year by year, to remember the days of abstinence and of sorrow, in which the Son of God was tempted by the evil one, while fasting and praying in the wilderness of Judea.

And it is to be noted, that the observation of the season of Lent is no new thing in the Christian Church, but it has been kept from the times of the Apostles even until now, showing how fully in all ages the Church acknowledged the necessity of a proper attention to particular seasons, as assisting us to know and feel "how great things God hath done for us already." Again, there are great numbers who resist the teaching of the Church with regard to the keeping of this holy season, and who say that this also partakes of Roman error, and that, therefore, it should be abolished; but such people only prove their own ignorance in the Church's history, or their hatred to the English branch of Christ's Church by such opposition, as, had they a true knowledge of religious matters on these subjects, they would know that, as before stated, the season of Lent, either in a shorter or longer degree, had been observed by the Church at large, long before the errors which now so unhappily defile the Church in Rome, had been taught or promulgated. And others again there are, who say that the Church has no right to teach the duty of *fasting*, for that it also is only a remnant of Romanism; but these poor beings, who thus strive to fasten a stigma upon the Church of Christ, prove their own great want of a knowledge of Scripture, and show how unwilling they are to follow plain Bible teaching, especially when such teaching interferes with their sensual and carnal enjoyments, for God's Word was written for our learning, and for our guidance, that we might know our duty to God, by the commandments contained therein, and the examples of the holy

men of old, whose lives are recorded for our sakes. And we find that fasting and humiliation was to be observed by the Jews, under the guidance of God's law. We find that the prophets fasted. Christ himself fasted, and told us how we should fast (Matt. vi., 16, 17); and also we read of the Apostles and first Christians fasting.—Acts xiii., 3, 2 Cor. vi., 5. So that unless we think that we are more pure than they were, and require less assistance than them, to help us on the way to heaven, we must not pretend to say, that it is not our duty to fast, as much as it was the duty of the prophets, and of the Apostles. But yet again people in general do not seem to understand in its full sense the meaning of the word, "fasting;" many considering that it relates only to the abstaining from food or drink, and this certainly is the meaning when the word is used in Scripture, speaking of the fasts then observed. But when used in a wider sense, the word fasting has a far fuller meaning, so as to embrace, fasting from pleasure at certain seasons, so that we may give ourselves up more exclusively to God's service; fasting from labour even, so that instead of seeking the gold which perishes, we might seek the bread of eternal life, giving our labourers or servants time to go to the house of God at solemn seasons, lest we should bring upon ourselves the rebuke which fell upon the Jews of old, from the mouth of the prophet when he said, "Behold in the day of your fast, ye find pleasure and exact all your labours."—Isaiah, lviii., 3. And above all, there is the fasting from our sins, which is the highest order of all, but to the obtaining of which, we would be sure to find the other modes of fasting which have been mentioned, a great assistance, provided we fast from proper motives—from a sincere desire to humble ourselves before God, with constant and earnest prayer for heavenly grace to purify our hearts and to strengthen our souls. But the fast which the Church has appointed to be kept most strictly and severely of all, is on the day commonly known as Good Friday, in which we look back to the scenes of our Saviour's final sufferings, when He was nailed in agony to the accursed tree, crucified and slain for our sins.

And surely if ever we are called to humble and humiliate ourselves low in the dust before the King of Heaven, it is then; then, when we are brought to remember that our sins and our iniquities, were the cause of the stripes, and wounds, and bitter agony, of the Son of God, when we profess by our

outward service the deep humbleness of our hearts at the thought of our utter unworthiness and fearful forgetfulness of God, which, without the atoning blood of Christ, would have sunk our souls for ever in everlasting torment. With regard to this day also, are we made to feel how great is the opposition which the enemies of the Church bear against her services; for not only do they refuse to join in keeping this day sacred, but oftentimes the careless laugh and scornful smile are seen and heard, when God's children are wending their way to the house of the Lord upon that day, for prayer and praise to Him who gave His only and well-beloved Son to misery and death, to save those very souls who refuse to keep the day as unto Him, and who are afraid to let their work slack, or their hand cease from labour, to attend at the worship of their crucified Redeemer.

But for all such opposition, which can be only the work of the Devil, the great enemy of the Lord Jesus, the Church still holds on her way, and we may be very sure that, with the blessing of the Almighty, she will go on even unto the end, still observing as most sacred, that day devoted for hundreds of years past, to the commemoration of the Redemption of the world by the death of Christ.

But time will not allow me to speak as fully as I should wish, on all these holy days, so I must hasten onward. The Sunday after Good Friday brings us to the joys of Easter, when we are called to rejoice with our risen Lord,—in the conquest He has won—in the victory over death and the grave which He has secured—in the blessed hope of we ourselves being able to burst the fetters of the grave at the last day, and rising with Him who saved us, to the mansions of the Father.

Forty days then are passed, when comes Ascension Thursday, in which the Church celebrates the ascension of Christ into Heaven, where He is gone, to prepare a place for His faithful followers, in order that as once He prayed to His Heavenly Father, when He was on the earth, "they may be with Him where He is."

And then on Whit-Sunday, or fifty days after Easter, we are taught how the Holy Ghost descended on the Apostles in flaming tongues of fire, filling them with wisdom and with knowledge, and enabling them in a moment of time to comprehend and to speak all languages, so that they might be able to teach all nations. And finally, upon the next Sunday, we are taught

the great doctrine of three persons, and yet but one God—the Unity in Trinity and Trinity in Unity—and therefore that Sunday is called in the calendar, Trinity Sunday.

I have now mentioned the various particular seasons of most note in the Church Service, that is, those which are held in especial remembrance of our Lord and Saviour. There are many other days appointed to be observed also, but these may be called the lesser festivals, as being those which relate to the Apostles, &c. ; but these are seldom kept, except in those churches where there is service held every day, as was intended should always be the case,—and then on the holy days, as they are named, we are called to take example or warning, as the case may be, from those portions of Holy Scripture in which the deeds and words of the first followers of our Lord are recorded. But while here, on account of the thin and scattered congregations, we are not called to the observance of all these holy days, yet should we hold them in reverence ; and with regard to the greater festivals, held in honour of Christ Himself and of His mighty deeds, we should be more especially careful not to slight them in any degree, by either speaking lightly of them, or by failing to observe them. And it is by those sacred days, observed in remembrance of Christ, that the Church leads her children, year by year continually, to a true knowledge of all God's mighty works in our behalf, and strives to teach them to lift up their thoughts and hearts to Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world.

And to prove that it is nothing but their enmity against the Church, which makes the dissenters raise the cry of Romanism with regard to the Church Services, we have only to look at their own forms of worship. For instance, the Presbyterian body do constantly appoint certain days for especial fasting and prayer, but yet there is no cry of Romanism raised against them. The Methodist body also appoint particular times, when, according to their manner of worship, for a long period their adherents are expected to be more constant in attendance, even day by day, for weeks together ; but there is no cry of Romanism raised against them, and yet they approach far closer to the errors of Rome in their teachings, than does the Church of England. Let us compare them :—Rome teaches her people that if they will only make confession of their sins to the priest, and get him to pray over

them, and give them absolution in the name of the Lord, that their sins will be pardoned. The dissenters will gather their people together, and when their preachers have raised the minds of the congregation to great excitement, by their mad gestures, and wild, I might almost say, blasphemous language, will call their hearers to certain benches, and when they come, (moved, *not* by calm and pure religion, but too often by nothing but the heat and violence of their feelings), then these self-styled ministers will whisper and pray with them in a manner which is neither becoming or decent, and assure their poor deluded victims that they are converted; and straightway these new members feel raised above their fellows, and boast in their fancied knowledge and self-righteousness. Brethren, which are the worst? We might, perhaps, be led to think that their so termed conversions were sincere, if, afterwards, these people lived up to their profession; but do we not find them for the most part just as wanting in charity as before, sometimes a good deal more so? Are they not just as ready to take advantage of their neighbours in their dealings as other men are? Are they not often found speaking falsely with their lips? Are they not proud and self-righteous to a fearful extent, and utterly refusing to attend to the instruction and teaching of the ministers of Christ and His Church, for they hesitate not to "despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities?" Remember, I speak generally; there are, we trust, exceptions, even among dissenters.

But, again, Rome teaches we may do evil that good may come; the dissenters teach the same. I suppose that neither Romanist or dissenter would allow that they taught so, but what do their actions prove? Rome takes the Bible from her followers, and she would punish with fearful torment those who oppose her teaching; she says it is right, the Bible says it is wrong; she does evil that good may come. The dissenters (at least great numbers of them) refuse to teach even God's Commandments in their Sunday schools; they think *that* would be too much like the Church, and so *they* withhold the Word of God from their children in their teaching. They teach that schism is right; they compel variance, and strife, and division; and they teach their members *not* to obey those who are placed in authority over them. Whereas, the Bible says, "there shall be no schism and no

strife;" the Bible says that we *are* to obey our teachers in Church matters and spiritual things (Heb. xiii., 17); verily do the dissenters also "do evil that (according to their notions) good may come." Truly they teach many such errors as Rome teaches.

How different are the Services of the Church! She strives to keep the middle way, avoiding the sins of Rome upon the one hand, and striving to avoid the sins of dissent upon the other. She holds the Bible open in her hand, as her rule of faith. She follows the example of the holy men of old in her services, as far as lies in her power; those services are all pure, calm, simple, and devotional; there is no sinful excitement, no loud and disgraceful clamour, and while her members are always called to take part in the service and worship of God, with their voices as well as with their hearts, they are still taught what God's Word does teach, viz., that the priests and ministers of the Church—properly appointed and ordained by the heads of the Church—alone have a right to minister at the altar, or to lead into the Kingdom of Christ, through the gate of baptism, the little ones of God.

Strive, dear friends, to remember these things, and when you hear the Prayer Book assailed, as containing teaching contrary to the Bible, look and examine for yourselves, and you will find that the greatest portion of it is taken from Scripture itself; you will find many pure and beautiful prayers,—but you can see nothing therein that does not agree with the Bible. You will find no prayer which a true Christian need hesitate to offer up before the throne of the Eternal; and remember, further, that God has so blessed this holy book of devotion, that now it has been used in the Church for upwards of three hundred years since its first formation, there is no new doctrine in it to make us doubt or wonder, but simply the direct and scriptural teaching of the Church of England and of Ireland, from the days of the Reformation until now.

With regard to the Church herself, the opinion of the generality of men appears to be in direct variance with Scripture; but this we must in a great measure expect, as we know that Satan will leave no stone unturned, in his endeavour to overthrow that Church which Christ Himself established; and men's hearts being "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked," they but too often fall into the snares which the Devil lays for their souls, and so learn to hate the Church

instead of loving her, they learn to despise her, instead of showing her reverence. Let us look, then, into the grounds upon which the Church claims obedience and reverence from all men.

We will first go back to the Old Testament, which was "written for our learning" (Rom. xv. 4), and see there how strict was the law of God, which He gave unto His people, concerning the priesthood and Divine Service. Nothing could be more plainly laid down than the commandment, that none but the sons of Levi should ever be allowed to minister in holy things (Numbers iii. 10), and they (the Levites) were divided into three different orders—the High priest, the priests, and the Levites—to all of whom were their several spheres of duty allotted, and one was not allowed to interfere with the office of the other. The priests were appointed to offer up the sacrifices and to teach God's Word unto the people, and to bless the people in God's name (Deut. x. 8), and none but them and their descendants, as ordained by the Almighty, dare presume to take upon themselves the holy office of being God's ministers, so strict was the commandment, and so signal the punishment, which fell direct from God, upon those who violated this law. I need but mention, as one instance, the punishment which fell upon Korah, Dathan and Abiram, and the two hundred and fifty princes who rose up with them,—whom God destroyed with an earthquake and with fire,—a warning "that no stranger, who is not of the seed of Aaron, come near to offer incense before the Lord."—Numbers xvi. 40. And once, again, when Uzziah, king of Judah, had become proud and haughty, and ventured to intrude "into the Temple of the Lord, to burn incense upon the altar of incense," then quickly the wrath of God fell upon him, and "the leprosy even rose up in his forehead before the priests in the house of the Lord" (2 Chron. xxvi. 19), and he remained "a leper unto the day of his death." So powerfully did God declare His will, that none should presume to take upon them the sacred office, unless the Lord had appointed them, either as the sons of Aaron or as prophets, who, by their miracles, were able to prove that the Lord had sent them. And when the Saviour came into the world to establish a second covenant with the sons of men, and instituted the Christian Church, do we not find just the same teaching plainly to be learned from the New Testament, as we learn the laws of the Jewish Church

from the Old Testament. Before Christ ascended into heaven, He appointed and ordained the Twelve Apostles, whom He commanded to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, and He gave them the blessed promise, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. xxviii. 20); and how could that promise of the Saviour have been fulfilled, except through His being with the successors of the Apostles. The Apostles themselves died like other men, and did not live unto the end of the world; but they appointed other men to take their places as heads of the Christian Church, and through them—the bishops of the Church—is the promise of the Holy One being fulfilled,—He being "with them alway" in the great work of the ministry of the Gospel.

Nor do we find one single instance in the New Testament of any one being sent out to teach and to preach, except those who were regularly called and ordained, either by the Apostles, or by St. Paul, who was himself miraculously chosen by Christ Himself.

And listen to what St. Paul writes to Titus, "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city."—Titus i. 5. Hear also what he says to Timothy, "lay hands suddenly on no man."—1 Tim. v. 22. "The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."—2 Tim. ii. 2. There is no speaking of men being sent to the ministry unless first ordained, and that, too, by those who had true authority to do so, even by the heads of the Church. There were not wanting, indeed, even in the Apostles' days, men who sought to exalt themselves to be teachers, of whom St. Paul thus speaks, alluding to those who had departed from the true faith and charity: "From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling, desirous to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm." 1 Tim. i. 6. But when Christ commanded that the Church should be one, when He prayed that all believers in His name might be one, even as He and His Father are one (St. John xvii. 21), it stands as a matter of necessity that men should not be allowed to assume the sacred office of the priesthood at their individual will, for then it would be impossible to keep the Church united, but Christians would be broken up into various and discordant bodies, even as they are in the present

day. But to keep the Church at unity in herself—to keep order in holy things—to keep people from being at enmity and variance among themselves,—to do this the heads of the Church alone, must appoint and ordain ministers, the laws of the Church must be obeyed, and the people should ever look unto the Church as their ruler and as their guide, in all holy things and in Divine worship.

And because the Apostles foresaw how much evil would arise from false teachers thrusting themselves into high and holy places, they gave continual warning to their converts to beware of such evil doers, commanding and beseeching them to be of one mind in the Gospel; and thus St. Paul addresses the Romans (Rom. xvi. 17), “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and *avoid them*, for they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.” Again, writing to the Corinthians (1 Cor. xi. 18), he rebukes them for their divisions, saying, “For, first of all when ye come together in the Church, I hear that there be divisions among you, and I partly believe it;” and he says, “In this that I declare unto you, I praise you not.” He beseeches the Ephesians (ch. iv) to “keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace,” and tells them that “there is one body (which is the Church) and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all.” And he declares that the Lord “gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive.” He says to the Philippians (Phil. ii. 2), “Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.” To the Colossians he says that Christ “is the head of the body—the Church,” Col. i. 18–24. To the Hebrews he writes (Heb. xiii. 9), “Be not carried

about with divers and strange doctrines." Thus it was that the first converts were warned against divisions, and against those false teachers who "despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities," those "who separate themselves, sensual, having not the spirit."—St. Jude xix. And because the Apostles knew that false teachers would arise, they warned their converts beforehand, and not their immediate converts only, but also all Christians in all ages of the world; thus St. Paul writes (2 Tim. iv. 3), "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears." And St. Peter says (2 Peter ii. 1), "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction." But how different is the language used when speaking of the true teachers; St. Paul writes to the Hebrews (Heb. xiii. 17), "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account."

Thus we find that the teaching and instructions of the Bible give the Church a title to that obedience which she claims, and calls for an unbroken unity among Christians. And, brethren, the Church of England (or, as she is called in some places, the Protestant Episcopal Church,) is the same Church which Christ established; her ministers trace back their appointment from age to age till they come to apostolic times; and her very existence, with her three-fold order of bishops, priests and deacons, as established by the Apostles, with the great fact, that she holds the Word of God alone, as her standard of faith and practice, are a fulfilling of the words of Christ to His Apostles, when He said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world;" the end of the world, indeed, has not yet come, but eighteen hundred years have passed away, and the Church (although for a little while before the Reformation she had fallen very low) still keeps spreading over the world; by the grace of God she has shaken off the filth with which the Devil had striven to weigh her down, and now, in spite of all opposition from enemies within, and from enemies without, she is sending forth colonists to all parts of the earth, and from the east to the west,

and from the north unto the south, all lands can bear witness to the truth of that saying of the Lord Jesus unto Peter, "Upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."—St. Matt. xvi. 18. Yet, for all the declarations of Scripture are so plain, with regard to the appointment of ministers and the authority of the Church; for all the Bible declares in open and emphatic language that there should be no division in the Church—no variance—no envy—no disobedience to God's ministers,—for all the Bible declares these things, with, as it were, the voice of a trumpet; how is it with those who call themselves by the name of Christ? They are broken up into various bodies, jarring and disobedient with one another; one man leaves the Church, creating schism and division, and Satan soon tempts others to join the rebellious ranks, till a large body is formed, who call themselves by the name of their leader, or after their especial teaching, or with some name which they assume to distinguish them from the rest of men. And then another breaks off from them, and another, and another, till the different bodies become a legion, each declaring that they are the holy ones, and that their opponents are in error, until all unity is done away—all concord is destroyed—Christians are at enmity one with another, and in only one thing do these dissenters seem to be cordially united, and that is—opposition to the Church of God.

It is in vain that they profess to love the Church, for, generally speaking, they work all they can to mutilate and destroy her, and their loudest boast is when they thin the Church's ranks, and grieve her members, by attracting with their exciting and carnal meetings, some poor, misguided, and unfortunate, creatures, within their own rebellious and schismatical body—rebellious, because they rebel against the laws written in the Bible, and against the Church which Christ established; they are schismatical, for they cut and rend that body of which Christ is the Head—even the Church of the living God. And yet some of these dissenting bodies boast loudly of their superior piety and holiness, and talk as if they were blessed above all others, in being filled with the spirit of God, and enabled to live free from sin and wickedness; but in these boastings they only shew forth their pride and deformity of heart, and prove how little the Christian grace of humility reigns within them; they are like the Pharisee of old, who stood apart and thanked

God that he was not as other men. They may not, perchance, follow the more open sins, for they must keep up an outside show; but within they are full of self-righteousness and fancied knowledge—many of them strive to make themselves teachers,—"they despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities." And what is the consequence of this grievous discord? but that by very many the great truths of the Bible are rejected and thrown away. For example, there is one sect that denies the divinity of Christ, and casts off the Son of God altogether. Another sect denies the existence of eternal punishment, thus giving a license to all sorts of wickedness. Another sect denies the use and validity of the Sacraments, ordained by Christ Himself. Others teach infamous sins and impurities, and thousands of people are becoming infidels, and do not believe in any thing, except the gratification of their own carnal lusts and appetites. And can this be wondered at, when once men venture to break away from the Church, and declare that each one is to judge and act for himself as his own mind dictates, and so far casts off the Bible as to reject its teachings in various ways; what is there to restrain them? The Bible says, "there should be no schism in the body" (1 Cor. xii. 25); but some man will say (or feel) that cannot exactly be the case, for it cannot be any harm to leave the Church,—and yet that is schism; he argues against the truth; he is like a man who makes a breach in the bank of a river, which he imagines will not matter, but soon the breach becomes greater, and the waters rush out with a rapidity that cannot be overcome.

Or let us bring the case nearer home, and consider how it would be were all in our own neighbourhood members of the Church. Suppose for a moment that there was no dissent among us; then, dear brethren, we could help one another on, ten, ay, an hundred fold more, in the way of righteousness; then each man might entice his brother, saying,—“Let us enter into the temple of the Lord together;” then there would be no dividing of families, one member going one way, and another going in a different way; then whole families and kindred would be seen hastening in one direction—we would be all tending to one point—meeting one another in one place, and that place the house of the Lord; and then, indeed, we might, as the apostle speaks, “with one mind and with one mouth glorify God.”—Rom. xv. 6. How different—how widely different from the

scenes around us now ; division, even in families ; envy, variance, strife, emulation, heresy, schism amongst those who call themselves Christians ; the body of Christ is rent asunder by factious parties, who "despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities." And even the very children learn, and are taught in many instances, to run here and there, first to one place and then to another, and so are brought by degrees, but too often, to despise and hate the Church of God ; and yet our population boast of being Protestant, and of having the Bible for their guide,—they are Protestants, indeed, in the wide meaning of the word, but how many of them make it the chief business of their lives—to live as those who protested against evil ? They have the Bible, indeed, in their houses, but alas, do they not very often refuse to obey its teaching ? for they "despise dominion, and (they) speak evil of dignities." Brethren, these things ought not so to be, "for God is not the author of confusion, but of peace," as saith the apostle.—1 Cor. xiv. 33. It is a difficult matter to speak thus plainly, and many a hard word do I expect to hear spoken about me, for my language this day ; but the ministers of God must not fear the world, nor dread the world's opinion ; they are to teach the Bible, and that in all its fulness ; and if I should fail to give you warning concerning the evils around you,—if I am remiss in putting you upon your guard against the enemies of the Church—how then should I deliver my own soul ?

The Bible says there should be no schism and no division ; the dissenters work for both, and with both. The Bible says that the Church—the body of Christ—should be one, one in love, one in mind, one in heart ; the dissenters strive to rend that Church in twain, and sow enmity, discord and variance amongst Christians, and among families, and they teach others to do as they themselves—who "despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities."

Brethren, the Church of Christ calls you to her fold ; she holds out to you the Word of God, and all her teaching is grounded on that Word. She brings your little children into the family of Christ in baptism. She teaches them the Scriptures in their youth. She has them confirmed and strengthened when they grow up. She calls them to feed at the table of the Lord, that they may grow in grace and be nourished by heavenly food. She exhorts you continually to turn unto your God ; and when you die, the tender care of the Church still

hovers over you, and she never leaves you till you are laid in the grave, and she has committed your soul to the care of God who gave it. In Christ's name, then, I say unto you, be faithful to the Church of God; and when you hear her assailed on all sides, as being full of evil, then examine her teaching by the Bible, and you will find that she will stand the test. When you hear the Church accused of doing things like the Church of Rome, ask yourself, is she doing any thing contrary to Scripture? For you may be well assured, as before stated, that the cry of Romanism that is raised against the Church, is only the war cry of a false enemy,—who well knows that the Church of England has been the great bulwark against the errors of the Church of Rome—even from the Reformation until now.

Finally, remember that the Bible says, that in the Church there should be no schism, no division, no enmity, no strife, no variance, no dissension; remember the command to “obey those who are placed over you,” in things spiritual; remember that none have a right to minister in holy things, save those who are rightly ordained by the Church. Remember we should not become like those who “despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities;” but we should learn to *submit ourselves*, and to behave ourselves rightly “in the house of God,” which, as St. Paul saith to Timothy, “*is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.*”—1 Tim. iii. 15.

APPENDIX.

In order to show more clearly how professing Christians are broken up into various and discordant bodies, completely different in their religious views in many important and vital points, I here subjoin a list of the dissenting denominations, as far as my present means of enquiry will allow me :—

OLD SCHOOL PRESBYTERIANS.	FREE WILL BAPTISTS.
NEW SCHOOL PRESBYTERIANS.	HARD SHELL BAPTISTS.
CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIANS.	SOFT SHELL BAPTISTS.
UNITED PRESBYTERIANS.	LITTLE CHILDREN BAPTISTS.
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND (in England)	GLOPY HALLELUJAH BAPTISTS.
COVENANTERS.	CHRISTIAN BAPTISTS.
CONGREGATIONALISTS.	IRONSIDES BAPTISTS.
INDEPENDENTS.	GENERAL BAPTISTS.
BURGHERS.	PARTICULAR BAPTISTS.
ANTI-BURGHERS, &c.	SEVENTH-DAY BAPTISTS.
EPISCOPAL METHODISTS.	SCOTCH BAPTISTS.
WESLEYAN METHODISTS.	NEW COMMUNION GENERAL BAP- TISTS.
PRIMITIVE METHODISTS.	BROWNISTS.
WESLEYAN REFORMERS.	CAMERONIANS.
WELSH CALVANISTIC METHODISTS.	CRISPITES.
PLYMOUTH BRETHREN.	DALE-ITES.
ORIGINAL CONNEXION METHODISTS.	CAMPBELITES.
NEW CONNEXION METHODISTS.	DUNKERS OR TUNKERS.
BIBLE CHRISTIANS (they call them- selves so.)	FREE THINKERS.
SWEDENBORGIANS.	HALDANITES.
ANABAPTISTS.	HUNTINGDONIANS.
SEVEN PRINCIPAL BAPTISTS.	IRVINGITES.
CHURCH OF GOD BAPTISTS.	INGHAMITES.
FREE COMMUNION BAPTISTS.	JUMPERS.
CLOSE COMMUNION BAPTISTS.	GLASSITES.

QUAKERS.	MENNONISTS
SHAKERS.	RANTERS.
UNITARIANS.	ROGEREENS.
SOCINIANS.	SEEKERS.
REFORMED DUTCH.	UNIVERSALISTS.
GERMAN PROTESTANT REFORMED.	WALKERITES.
ZWINGLIANS, &c.	WHITFIELDITES.
MORAVIANS.	JANSENISTS.
CHRIST- IANS.	WIMBRENNERIANS.
MORMONS.	FREE LOVE DISCIPLES.
KELLY-ITES.	LUTHERANS.
MUGGLETONIANS.	FRENCH PROTESTANTS.
PERFECTIONISTS.	RONGE-ITES.
NEW LIGHTS.	&c. &c.

Now, how can any man say that such fearful division is right, or Scriptural, when he reads the prayer of the Lord Jesus to His heavenly Father: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word,—That they all *may be one*: as Thou Father art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may *be one* in us."—St. John, xvii., 20, 21. And St. Peter says: "Be ye all of *one mind*."—1 Peter, iii. 8.

"From all false doctrine, heresy and schism, good Lord deliver us."—*Litany*.

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